

U.N. Setup Is Sought For Banning A-Tests

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The Administration is seeking a United Nations agreement for a multilateral nuclear guarantee against nuclear blackmail by any country possessing atomic arms.

Informed officials indicated, however, that the idea is still in the early stages of probing because of the delicate nature of the subject. But there is no denying that Communist China's second nuclear test has brought urgency to the Administration's search for ways to stop the spread of nuclear weapons.

This concept of a United Nations - multilateral nuclear umbrella is an extension of

President Johnson's statement of Oct. 18, 1964, after Red China set off its first atomic device, that "the nations that do not seek national nuclear weapons can be sure that if they need our strong support against some threat of nuclear blackmail, they will have it."

This unilateral pledge, which has neither been formally accepted nor rejected by any non-nuclear nation, was reaffirmed yesterday by State Department officials.

The notion of an American nuclear umbrella for the rest of the world has met with some reluctance. India, for example, reportedly would prefer a multilateral guarantee to stuff potential nuclear club members into the proverbial bottle.

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ample, reportedly would prefer a multilateral guarantee. It is primarily to satisfy this kind of desire that prompted the Administration to think in terms of a United Nations guarantee.

What the concept requires is for the United States to convince the three other nuclear powers now in the United Nations — France, Britain and Russia — that it is in their interest to prevent the further spread of nuclear arms.

Yesterday in London, for example, an American official warned that 20 countries will be able to manufacture cheap atomic bombs in three years unless the world's great powers join to prevent proliferation of such bombs.

It is understood that American disarmament officials have already held informal talks with their British counterparts on the U.N.-multilateral scheme. There are hints, too, that these officials might take advantage of the current 114-nation U.N. disarmament talks in New York to approach the French and the Russians, even though the Russians rejected a related concept earlier this year.

The U.N.-multilateral nuclear umbrella idea also implies that the U.N., itself, accept the fact that there are two kinds of members in its midst — the nuclear nations and the non-nuclear nations.

If the two conditions for success of the Administration's idea can be met — acceptance by the other nuclear powers in the UN. and by the U.N. itself — then in the view of Administration officials the spread of nuclear weapons can be slowed appreciably. This is so because the "haven't" nations in the U.N. would be taking a pledge not to acquire atomic arms in exchange for a pledge from their own international agency to protect them against nuclear blackmail.

This is just one of the ways in which Administration officials are trying before it is too

late to stuff potential nuclear club members into the proverbial bottle.

Thus, for example, it was clear yesterday that the Chinese blast will increase the pressure to seek a test-ban treaty that outlaws all nuclear tests such as the low intermediate yield detonation set off by the U.S. yesterday at its Nevada underground nuclear test site. The limited test ban treaty now permits such underground tests.

In spite of Russian intransigence on discussing a comprehensive test ban treaty, as it is called, the Administration apparently intends to press the matter. This was touched upon yesterday by State Department spokesman Robert J. McCloskey who said the U.S. would continue to "work for agreements to end all tests and reduce nuclear armaments under conditions that contribute to the peace of the world."

Though the limited test-ban treaty was not signed by Communist China or France, some Administration officials think a total test ban would place a further political and psychological bar in the way of other nations that might be tempted to make the political decision to produce atomic weapons.